JIM PETERMAN

Currently a Senior Product Manager for the Network Systems Division of Tekelec, Jim has worked in a variety of Government and Industry positions dealing with numerous telecommunications, networking, digital electronics and signal processing topics. Jim's career began in 1980 at the Naval Surface Weapons Center in Dahlgren, VA, through the cooperative education program at Tennessee Technological University. His work for the Navy included the development of the Data Acquisition and Reduction Processor, a dedicated logic analyzer for tactical computers, for which he was awarded a patent. His master's thesis addressed the application of Ethernet technologies to tactical shipboard environments. Following the completion of an MSEE in 1985, Jim joined GTE Government Systems in Research Triangle Park, NC, where he managed a team of digital hardware designers developing communications, signaling, and data processing equipment for US Army operations. A transition into systems engineering roles led to research, analysis, requirements definition and system design work for a variety of tactical network scenarios. As a senior manager for General Dynamics, Jim managed a variety of software intensive projects focusing on network design and network management for military applications. In addition to research and development, Jim has also been involved with engineering process improvement and quality initiatives serving as an ISO-9001 Internal Auditor and Team Leader. Jim's current responsibilities involve advanced product planning for the wireline and wireless telecommunications infrastructure. Jim holds BSEE and MSEE degrees from Tennessee Tech and an MBA from Regis University.

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THOUGHTS ON ADVANCED DEGREES, FORMAL AND INFORMAL TRAINING, AND AVOIDING OBSOLESCENCE

Electrical engineering is a vastly broad field that covers thousands of complex topics and technologies. Furthermore, it is a field that is changing very rapidly. Technologies that were the subject of obscure research just a few years ago are now commonplace in consumer products. An engineer is faced with the tremendous challenge of keeping abreast of the changes in technology and the profession. How can it be done?

Education is the key. By continually learning, an engineer can maintain his technical strengths and ensure a career, not just a job. This presentation explores some of the challenges facing electrical engineers and provides insight into the continuing education opportunities available. Criteria for making key decisions regarding which continuing education option is right for you are presented.